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SUBJECT: TIP REPORT DEMARCHE: GOK WELCOMES CRITICISM, SAYS
IT MUST "FINISH ITS HOMEWORK"

REF: SECSTATE 60642

¶1. POLCOUNS on June 15 delivered reftel demarche notifying Kuwait of its Tier 3 ranking in the 2009 TIP report both to Mr. Hamad Sulaiman Al-Mishaan, First Secretary of the Americas Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), and to Mr. Hamad Al-Medhadi, Undersecretary for Co-operative Affairs and Acting Undersecretary at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MOSAL). In response, both GOK officials said they would immediately forward the demarche message to their respective Ministers.

¶2. The MFA's Al-Mishaan was very welcoming and thanked POLCOUNS for briefing him prior to the June 16 public release of the report. He recognized the GOK's own shortcomings on TIP and expressed a curiosity over how Bahrain and other GCC countries fared in this year's TIP rankings. His final remark on the GOK's TIP efforts was, "We have homework. We should finish our homework."

¶3. MOSAL's Al-Medhadi was similarly welcoming and acknowledged that TIP was a small sore point in a strong and largely positive bilateral relationship. He said that the Council of Ministers was drafting a TIP law which would eventually go before the National Assembly and that MOSAL was considering ways to reform Kuwait's foreign worker sponsorship system. However, he expressed doubts concerning the ability of Kuwait's parliament to effectively handle TIP, saying that, "The government of Kuwait is moving forward (on TIP), but the National Assembly is out of our control."

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